



AMERICA'S  
**CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS**  
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**Statement of Congressman Emanuel Cleaver II  
Committee on Rules Hearing  
Amendment (in the Nature of a Substitute) to H. Con. Res. 34  
Offered by Mr. Cleaver of Missouri and Mr. Scott of Virginia  
Wednesday, April 13, 2011**

On behalf of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), thank you Chairman Dreier and Ranking Member Slaughter, for the opportunity to share the significance with you on allowing the CBC to offer our alternative budget as an amendment in the nature of a substitute to the Majority Budget. As you may know the CBC has offered alternative budget proposals since 1981. I want to thank our Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Chairs, Congressman Bobby Scott and Congresswoman Gwen Moore for their yeoman's work on producing a budget that reflects the needs of the constituencies that we serve.

As I began my tenure as Chair, in January, the CBC hosted its first-ever Commission on the Budget Deficit, Economic Crisis and Wealth Creation because it was my sincere hope that we as the CBC would have a thoughtful reaction to the Fiscal Year 2012 Budget instead of an emotional reaction. The report produced by the Commission was our guide in developing our alternative budget proposal this year.

The Budget itself is a moral document—that guides the way we choose to run government and help the people we serve. Our FY 2012 alternative federal budget addresses the budget deficit while protecting important safety net programs needed most by our communities. The CBC's top priorities for the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress are promoting job creation and economic development, providing lifetime educational opportunities, and protecting the healthcare that we worked so tirelessly for the past 40 years—these priorities are all reflected in our budget. We can only make these goals a reality by sustaining and strengthening the programs that invest in people. Whether it is workforce investment, unemployment insurance, community development block grants, or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), we need to continue investing in people. These programs are vital to national interests because they train our workforce, stabilize our economy and provide funding for our cities. I understand that now is the time for us as a Nation to sacrifice in order to protect our children. However, I struggle to understand how the proposed majority budget helps achieve this goal. Due to many strategic investments, the nation's overall unemployment rate has lowered. However, the rate of unemployment among African Americans has risen. In order to improve this and not leave *anyone* out of a full recovery, we must make smart and targeted investments for communities in need. Cutting funding to programs that assist hard working Americans, help families with their most basic needs, maintain our crumbling infrastructure and expand access to educational opportunities will only make these statistics worse. Our success as a nation is interwoven in the success of *all* communities. Until we grasp that concept, as a

Nation, we will never see the full potential of this country and for that I am truly concerned.

As I stand before you today, I state with confidence that the Congressional Black Caucus must have the opportunity for an up or down vote on the House Floor on our amendment in the nature of a substitute to the FY 2012 budget offered by the majority.